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February 27,00

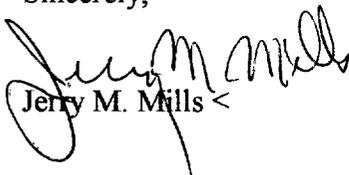
Ms Jane Henney, MD
Commissioner Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville MD 20857

Dear Dr. Henney;

We hear there is a movement underway to eliminate mail order hearing aid sales and service. This must not happen!

1. We could not be more satisfied with our mail order hearing aids and they cost half to one third of what the doctor/audiologists charge when we go through their clinics (and purchase the aids they sell). If you are concerned about price gouging or other rip-offs that is where to go.
2. There is no medical reason for a doctor/audiologist to intercede in the purchase of a hearing aid. Either the equipment fits, and works, or it doesn't and we are perfectly capable of fitting and judging for ourselves. It is no different from when we buy reading glasses off the drugstore counter. Either they fit or they don't and there is no risk to the public or us if they don't.
3. The convenience of mail order for people who cannot easily visit a hearing clinic cannot be over emphasized. Being able to obtain such service without leaving the house is invaluable and enables people who might otherwise have hearing problems, to function normally. The doctors/audiologists might argue that a person with hearing loss *really* needs to have a medical exam. Maybe so but I have yet to have such a person tell me he can restore my hearing loss through medical means. (But he just might be able to sell me an overpriced hearing aid.)
4. Lastly elimination of the mail order hearing aid businesses from the United States will just force us to go to Canada or Mexico for our equipment. There is no justification in paying \$1000 to \$2500 for equipment from a clinic when one can purchase equipment that is just as good for \$300 to \$600 by mail order.

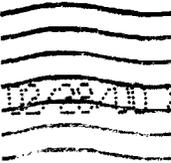
Sincerely,


Jerry M. Mills <

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